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The Government of American Cities. By WILLIAM BENNETT MUNRO. (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1912. Pp. lx, 401.)

The author of this work, who has recently been made professor of municipal government at Harvard, is well known, through his *Government of European Cities* and other contributions to this field, as one of the leading students of this branch of political science.

To quote from his preface (vii) this present book "deals with government rather than with administration, with the framework rather than with the functioning mechanism of the municipal organization. This is not because the latter is in any sense regarded as the less important of the two, but merely because it is proposed to deal fully with that phase of the subject in a later volume." We therefore do not expect to find a treatment of city planning, the construction of streets, sanitary administration, the problems incident to providing light, water, transportation, education, enlightenment, culture, safety, and peace, or any of the other undertakings which the city government faces after it has been set up. We are concerned here rather with the problems incident to setting up the government and making it responsive to the popular will. "We have heard so much," he tells us, "in recent years concerning what the government of American cities ought to be that an apology is hardly necessary for the emphasis which this volume places upon what their government really is."

The fourteen chapters in the book deal in succession with the following topics: American municipal development, which is treated in five periods; the social structure of the city, its people, their characteristics physical and moral, and their dependence upon the immediate environment; the relation of the city to the state, with a virile discussion of the policy of home-rule in legislation for municipal needs; municipal powers and responsibilities, with the best brief treatment of the ordinance power I have seen; the municipal electorate; nominations and elections, with a strong plea for the short ballot; municipal parties and politics; the city council, with the various plans of representation; the mayor; the administrative departments; municipal officials and employees; in addition to the foregoing, which the author calls "orthodox city government," follows a discussion of the newer government by commission; direct legislation and recall; and municipal reforms and reformers.

The treatment of this matter is wholly satisfactory. There is no erudite theorizing, no philosophical padding, but a practical statement,

lucid, direct, simple, and candid, of the machinery at present employed in conducting the affairs of a municipality. The amount of space given to parties, nominations and elections may be regarded as too great if one assumes that the reader is a student of the more general field of political science; but assuming that it is necessary to treat these matters fully in order that no lacunae may be left, the author's method leaves little to be desired. The point of view in the chapters on the newer methods of making government responsive to the popular will is neither pessimistic nor too sanguine. The author seems slow, however, to believe that these supposed panaceas for political ills are going to bring into play among the citizens a greater amount of intelligence than they have heretofore evinced; and without a greater display of intelligence, there is scarcely any reason to believe that our use of the recall will prove more successful than our use of the power to select officials has been. One must also doubt whether we shall legislate with any greater wisdom than we have used in the selection of legislators. "There are many who believe (331) that ordinance-making by city councils and law-making by legislatures have not by any means deteriorated to a point that calls for the application of drastic remedies," and there are also many who are unwilling to believe that neglect of duty on the part of the electorate is an argument for giving the electorate more duties to perform.

The footnotes are plentiful and useful. At the end of each chapter is an ample guide to further reading in the field with which the chapter deals. The index seems to be sufficient. On the whole, this promises to be one of the books that the student of American municipal government cannot do without.

EDGAR DAWSON.

Commission Government in American Cities. By ERNEST S. BRADFORD. (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1911. Pp. xiv, 359.)

Dr. Bradford's book belongs to that period in the literature of his subject which, accepting the commission form of government as a permanent addition to our institutions, devotes itself to a scientific study of the content of the idea. The author set as his task: "To inquire as to the rise of the plan, the reasons for its adoption, and the degree of success attained where it has been tried, and finally to analyze the idea into its elements, and to try to account for certain of the results which have followed its introduction.